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21 November 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. R.J. Smith
Mr. Sherman Kent

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SUBJECT : Request from Secretary McNamara

1. At our session on 20 November, Secretary McNamara informed me that he and Secretary Rusk were participating in a television program that would be taped on 18 December, aired in prime evening time on 19 December. The program will be produced by CBS News. Messrs. Rusk and McNamara will discuss Vietnam, with Messrs. Walter Cronkite and Charles Collingwood.

2. To assist him in getting ready for this program, Mr. McNamara asked if the Agency would prepare a comprehensive review of where we now stand in Vietnam, pulling together all the factors and indicators that bear on the problem, the degree of progress (or lack thereof) now being made, and the outlook for the near- and medium-term future. Mr. McNamara would like a thorough and objective analysis of the total current situation and trends discernible therein.

3. Specifically, Mr. McNamara asked that the requested study include our best judgments on the following topics:

- a) Enemy strength, in both South and North Vietnam;
- b) Current infiltration rates;
- c) Viet Cong recruitment (locally);

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d) The character of military actions (i. e., are the Viet Cong increasing their emphasis on guerrilla warfare to the detriment of large unit operations or not?);

e) The current state of population control;

f) The current state of pacification;

g) The bombing of the north, what has it accomplished?

h) What is the outlook for the future?

4. Mr. McNamara also requested that we comment on what he termed "beliefs of the day." For example, Westmoreland was now stating that North Vietnam was running out of men. Is this true or false?

5. On timing, Mr. McNamara requested that the completed memorandum be given to him on Saturday, 9 December. He will be departing for Europe that evening and wanted to take the memo with him to digest on the trip. 25X1

7. I would like to get together with the recipients of this memorandum or their designated representatives on Wednesday, 22 November, to orchestrate our assets so that we can respond to Mr. McNamara's request with a minimum of strain.

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Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

Attachments

cc: DCI Approved For Release 2004/08/17 : CIA-RDP70S00385R00200180018-2

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